

**TENNESSEE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
FISCAL REVIEW COMMITTEE**



FISCAL NOTE

SB 772 - HB 1115

March 15, 2011

SUMMARY OF BILL: Makes various changes to the election laws which include eliminating the procedure of voiding a new voter registration which returns to the election commission office and requires the election commission to apply the confirmation notice procedure to such registration instead; requiring the election commissions to appoint election officials 60 days rather than 45 days before the election; removing the requirement that the election commission publish a sample ballot a second time; reducing the early voting period by having early voting end seven days, rather than five days, before the election; reducing early voting in municipal elections where offices have no opposition; requiring a voter to state a date of birth on a request for ballot in order for such request to serve as an application for ballot; authorizing municipalities to direct the election commissions to have non-resident property owners vote by-mail; requiring the notice of election to be published in a newspaper no later than 21 days, rather than 10 days, before the qualifying deadline.

ESTIMATED FISCAL IMPACT:

Increase Local Expenditures - \$8,900/Every Two Years/Permissive

Decrease Local Expenditures - \$29,800/Every Two Years

\$254,200/FY11-12 and Every Other Year

\$508,400/FY12-13 and Every Other Year

Assumptions:

- Currently, delivery of registration notification forms is attempted twice before voiding. Under this bill, the second notice will become the confirmation notice and the registration will be placed in the inactive file and purged after two election cycles. Since two notifications are currently being sent, there will be no additional cost to local governments to change this procedure
- The sample ballot is currently published twice. The bill removes the publication of the sample ballot five days before an election and will only require one publication. Counties will save \$63,629 statewide per election based on a survey of the counties by the Coordinator of Election's office to determine the cost of publishing the sample ballot.
- According to the Coordinator of Elections, county savings estimates are based on a regular August or November election. By reducing the early voting period by two days, local expenditures will decrease \$190,593 statewide per election.

- In FY11-12, the decrease in local government expenditures statewide will be \$254,222 because there will be one election held (\$190,593 for the Presidential Preference Primary + \$63,629 publication of sample ballot).
- In FY12-13, the decrease in local government expenditures statewide will be \$508,444 (\$254,222 x 2) because there will be two elections (August and November).
- Authorizing a shorter early voting period for municipal elections with no opposition on the ballot from one to three days will reduce local expenditures. The number of municipal elections that will involve offices with no opposition is unknown; however, the counties surveyed by the Coordinator of Elections' office estimated a decrease in local expenditures of \$29,782 statewide every two years.
- If persons are registered to vote in a municipality as a non-resident property owner, the municipal legislative body may, by ordinance, direct these voters to cast the municipal ballots as absentee by-mail ballots. The number of municipalities that will adopt an ordinance is unknown, and will be dependent upon those municipalities that have non-resident property ownership voting and will be eligible to have the absentee application sent to those voters. The counties surveyed estimated the mailing cost for these municipalities will be \$8,886 statewide every two years and will be permissive based on whether the municipal legislative body elects to pass an ordinance.

CERTIFICATION:

The information contained herein is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.



James W. White, Executive Director

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